

# MEDIA RELEASE

City of Williams Lake



## For Immediate Release

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### Housing Incentive Program Cheque Presented to Local Developer

A local developer will be receiving a reimbursement for building costs associated with a new multi-family development in Williams Lake.

The Housing Incentive Program, launched by Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) in 2019, is aimed at creating density in the very tight northern region housing market. The program provides a reimbursement to the developer once an occupancy permit has been issued, and provides for \$10,000 per door. The minimum project size is a four-unit development, with a maximum of \$200,000 in rebates available.

A second project under this program has just been completed in Williams Lake by local contractor Titan Construction. The four-plex development on Mackenzie Avenue is adding four three-bedroom units to the available rental stock in Williams Lake.

“This program approval definitely helped the property owner decide to go ahead with the project,” said Darren McEachen, owner of Titan Construction. “This project going ahead also allowed us to keep our crews employed all last winter when things were looking pretty bleak after a hard first year of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. I have a crew of 25, and there is certainly a spin off benefit of being able to keep people employed that also comes from providing these incentives for development.”

NDIT’s CEO Joel McKay said he is pleased to see the uptake on the program for smaller communities like Williams Lake.

“It is good to see that this program is working as intended and making a difference in smaller communities where making the case for density is harder to do,” said McKay. “We are pleased to see that this program is being used so effectively in Williams Lake as a way to make an impact, and that their team is using it as a way to help create solutions to the housing crisis that we see all over the north.”

“Programs like this give us more options when we are working with the development community,” said Beth Veenkamp, Economic Development Officer at the City of Williams Lake. “We are taking a very proactive approach to increasing our available housing in Williams Lake, and being able to provide information on a range of incentives available to developers helps to move ideas into reality.”

Mayor Walt Cobb was able to present the rebate cheque to McEachen on a snowy day in the lake city, along with Veenkamp and Jessica Ball, the City's Grant Writer/Planning Analyst.

"It was great to get to have a look inside these new, fresh units that will be great family homes in the new year. We have been working hard on our housing inventory, and it's heartening to see that a project like this can happen within a year and provide new homes for families," Mayor Cobb said. "There is always going to be a good market for single family housing, but we are focused on how to maximize the limited land that we have available in the city to house as many people as possible. This program from NDIT is a really good reason for developers to look at projects a little differently than they are used to, with density in mind."

For more information on the range of incentives available to developers, please contact the City of Williams Lake's Economic Development Office.

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